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W. P. Bundy/bmm  
20 October 1962

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Possible Soviet Courses of Action against Overseas Bases and their  
Vulnerability to Such Actions

EXCISE DS 9208

I. Introduction

The Soviets are probably playing their cards on Cuba for leverage on two situations, Berlin and the overseas bases of the US and its allies. (The two are not at all exclusive of each other or of other motives such as disruption of SCS and NATO, etc.) The purpose of this memorandum is to analyze the overseas base picture to see how the Soviets might play their hand, to what degree the different base situations are vulnerable to various Soviet actions, and finally to see what we can do to counter these actions.

The Soviet lines of action fall roughly into three categories:

a. Generalized negotiation aiming at either the total removal of overseas bases or a new set of ground rules that would take the US out of selected bases.

b. Attempts to agitate particular situations and/or get them singled out for re-negotiation, chiefly through pressures on local public opinion leading to action by the local government itself.

c. Demonstrative or serious attacks on specific bases, in response to any US military action against Cuba.

II. Useful Base Categories

To get some kind of handle on the possibilities, it may be useful to set up categories as to which some at least of the vulnerabilities or lines of defense are roughly similar. These might be:

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Category A: bases on the territory of allies with freely elected governments.

NATO

UK

Canada

France

Germany

Italy

Turkey

Denmark (Greenland)

Iceland

Non-NATO

Japan

Philippines

Liberia (minor)

Category B: bases on the territory of anti-Communist nations (mostly allied), where although the government may not be freely elected, both its and popular sentiment are generally favorable to the bases.

Portugal (Azores) *Timor & Portuguese*

Spain

GRC (limited naval)

Pakistan (no offensive systems)

Korea (UK presence makes special case)

Thailand/Vietnam (limited forces only, no offensive systems)

Category C: bases on the territory of non-aligned or politically insecure nations, where local or governmental sentiment may be or become doubtful.

Morocco

Saudi Arabia (transit rights only)

Libya

Trinidad (minor naval only)

Ethiopia (communications only)

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Category D: bases dependent on ceded territory or military occupation, with clear legal status but major chance of inflamed local sentiment.

Panama

Okinawa

Category E:

Guantanamo

Category F: major bases of key allies

F-1: colonies

Afghanistan

Hong Kong

ibraltar

F-2: former colonies with residual rights

Singapore

Kenya

Cyprus

Algeria (Morocco-Tunisia)

Malta (as used as abandoned)

Category G: significant encroachments or limitations

Beijing (arrison forces only, no offensive systems)

Iran (treaty exclusion of forces, supplemented by declaration  
as to missiles)

Iraq (no organized forces even prior to recent agreements)

Vietnam/Thailand (de facto no offensive systems)

SRB (ditto, though this might change)

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### III. Relative Vulnerability

A. To generalized negotiation. Category A and Category B countries would probably be prepared to stand up and assert their continued desire to have US bases as a matter of their free choice under their right of self-defense. This is true even of Portugal and Pakistan under a condition of Soviet pressure. The only real difference between A and B countries would be in the propaganda field, where the absence of freely elected governments in the B countries would give the Soviets a handle.

From the standpoint of ground rules, even Category C countries would resist a general rule that countries could not have foreign powers with bases. It is at least possible that they would vote in the UN against such a general rule, since in all such cases there is a major direct benefit both from the bases and from the aid that is the quid pro quo. They would still be susceptible, however, to pressure for change and even removal as a matter of free choice rather than a general rule.

Another obstacle to a general rule against a foreign military presence is that the Soviets and their possible friends may well desire to extend such a Soviet presence, not merely to Cuba but perhaps in Algeria (after the effect of some 700+ US bases there). Thus the Soviet attack on the "overseas bases" might in fact boil down to an attempt to get a rule that nations are entitled to seek external aid and a foreign military presence, but that they are not entitled to maintain facilities for a foreign nation that clearly bear no relation to its own defense needs. This would point the finger at Morocco, Libya, Ethiopia, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia on the ground that the facilities there had -- arguably -- no such relation, while the Soviets

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would be directly threatened by the Soviet  
and other arguments about the present situation so the  
Soviet Union would be in such protective situations as Riga etc. 5  
would leave the NATO structure untouched — but then the Soviets would  
figure they could not gain much there anyway.

b-1

b-1

b-1

From the standpoint of generalized attack strategy (General  
Offensive) we are meeting the same basic as the Berlin Declaration. For both,  
the attack would be a generalized "all-out" kind of war and cannot be  
reached by localized arguments about local military or political  
presence in the countries since they are not separate from the main fronts.

Category 1, which suggests A frontal attack

effectiveness → would be that any nation is willing to accept  
military aggression by others. One does not have to judge of  
any particular power's capacity to do this.

R

Forward  
unclassified

Dear  
Mr.  
releasor

as a matter of operational understanding we can make the size  
of implications of an offensive character. The situation  
(historically neutral since 1921 and specifically protected by  
the Iron Curtain declaration to which the US acceded) is like  
Berlin itself, to which we have never been able to bring  
an offensive system nor have offered to make this kind of binding.

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[ ]  
agreement. We could certainly use these two parallels without danger to our foreseeable strategic needs. Southeast Asia is tempting, but any self-denial there involves the risk that the Chinese may one day come up with short-range missiles boomed at Saigon and Bangkok. But at least Laos is a safe additional parallel.

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To Specific Pressures against Popular Sentiment.

Again, it may safely be assumed that Category A and B countries would be fairly immune to pressure. However, the airing of the whole base issue would be likely to have an effect on those nations that are tempted to seek a greater quid pro quo (aid & political support) than they now have. Such possible anti-filers might include Spain, Portugal, and Pakistan.

The real targets, again, would be Category C and Category D countries. As a special case,

b-1 fact this seems a likely early move in any event.

In the Category C cases the objective would be to persuade or force the local government, via its opposition, to abrogate US base rights. How this would work varies a lot from case to case. Morocco has a real public opinion and it might turn easily against Hassan's present friendly

b-1 attitude toward extensions. Libya is probably less vulnerable, though it might be reached via USSR support for the Soviet position - both on general grounds and to get rid of the British in Aden and Cyprus. After this, the USSR would probably lead any fire-and-cry against bases. Ethiopia would probably stand firm, since (as in Libya) our two sides a lot of differences. However, both countries have outstanding Soviet offers that might militate well be renewed as part of the overall Soviet strategy. Saudi Arabia probably would neither panic nor scare much, nor do our Dhahran remaining rights make too much difference. Trinidad is playing its own game, chiefly for economic aid, and might go either way, but again the facility is not a vital one.

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Morocco, Morocco and Libya look like the trouble spots. The latter would be substantially more serious, since the communications facilities in Morocco can be replaced, though only with time and cost, while the air bases were planned to revert to maintenance only after 1963 anyway. [The intervening period would be a nuisance at best, and perhaps worse, with some real loss to our striking posture.]

As to Category D, Panama might well have a double-edged reaction, and its fear of the Soviet missiles could be played on to probably good effect. Skymore could be much more serious, because of the already great hostile sentiment both there and in Japan. Certainly the Soviets would pull out all the stops. It cannot be ruled out that they would even have a demonstrative attack on it to further inflammation. Its absolutely key importance to the whole defense of the Far East should make it the central target of this kind of offensive.

C. Military attack

In Turkey the Jupiter base that might be attacked by either conventional or nuclear weapons. The latter would be risky, but the former might be fairly low-risk counter to any US attack on the Soviet bases in Libya. Such an attack would not drive Turkey out of NATO, even if we did not take further action, but it could have a fairly generalizing effect on the Turks over some time to come, and would serve as a useful example ~~to the Arab World~~ from the Soviet standpoint.

Dhahran is too small a target in importance to shoot for, and any attack on Libya might ~~be successful~~ In the Arab World the Soviets would think it unwise. The same for Morocco, and either would have to

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be hit by missiles to avoid the strong chance of warning.

Elsewhere in the Middle East and Europe it is hard to see any attack possibilities that would offer reward without major risk.

In the Far East, Okinawa might be tempting, and the effect could be quite serious on the sensitive Japanese four zeros. However, it would be hard to effectively

At least a demonstration against the offshore islands would probably be a Chinese consideration, in light of evidence of some Chinese knowledge of Soviet plans. Hong Kong deserves mention, although the factors against attack seem as strong as before.

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**TRANSCRIPTION FOLLOWS**

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To get some kind of handle on the possibilities, it may be useful to set up Categories as to which some at least of the vulnerabilities or lines of defense are roughly similar. These might be:

page 2

Category A: bases on the territory of allies with freely elected governments.

<u>NATO</u>	<u>Non-NATO</u>
UK	Japan
Canada	Philippines
France	Liberia (minor)
Germany	

Italy  
Turkey  
Denmark (Greenland)  
Iceland

Category B: bases on the territory of anti-Communist nations (mostly allied), where although the government may not be freely elected, both it and popular sentiment are generally favorable to the bases.

Portugal (Azores) [handwritten:] Timor problem  
Spain  
[illegible]RC (limited naval)  
Pakistan (no offensive systems)  
Korea (UN presence makes special case)  
Thailand/Vietnam (limited forces only, no offensive systems)

Category C: bases on the territory of non-aligned or politically insecure nations, where local or governmental sentiment may be or become doubtful.

Morocco Saudi Arabia (transit rights only)  
Libya Trinidad (minor naval only)  
Ethiopia (communications only)

*page 3*

Category D: bases dependent on ceded territory or military occupation, with clear legal status but major chance of inflamed local sentiment.

Panama  
Okinawa

Category E:

Guantanamo

Category F: major bases of key allies

F-1: colonies

Aden  
Hong Kong  
Gibraltar

F-2: former colonies with residual rights

Singapore  
Kenya  
Cyprus  
Algeria (Mers-el-Kabir)  
Malta (as good as abandoned)

Category G: significant exclusions or limitations

Berlin (garrison forces only, as offensive systems)  
Iran (treaty exclusion of forces, supplemented by declaration as to missiles)  
Laos (no organized forces even prior to recent agreements)  
Vietnam/Thailand (de facto no offensive systems)  
[illegible]RC (ditto, though this might change)

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III. Relative Vulnerability

A. To generalized negotiation. Category A and Category B countries would probably be prepared to stand up and assert their continued desire to have US bases as a matter of their free choice under their right of self-defense. This is true even of Portugal and Pakistan under a condition of Soviet pressure. The only real difference between A and B countries would be in the propaganda field, where the absence of freely elected governments in the B countries would give the Soviets a handle.

From the Standpoint of ground rules, even Category C countries would resist a general rule that countries could not have foreign powers with bases. It is at least possible that they would vote in the UN against such a general rule, since in all such cases there is major direct benefit both from the bases and from the aid, that is the quid pro quo. They would still be susceptible, however, to pressure for change and even removal as a matter of free choice rather than a general rule.

Another obstacle to a general rule against a foreign military presence is that the Soviets and their possible friends may well desire to extend such a Soviet presence, not merely to Cuba but perhaps in Algeria (picture the effect of some 700-mile missiles there). Thus the Soviet attack against "overseas bases" might in fact boil down to an attempt to get a rule that nations are entitled to seek external aid and a foreign military presence, but that they are not entitled to maintain facilities for a foreign nation that clearly bear no relation to its own defense needs. This would point the finger at Morocco, Libya, Ethiopia, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia on the ground that the facilities there had – arguably—no such relation, while the Soviets

page 5 [mostly illegible]

would contend that [illegible] was directly threatened by the [illegible] and similar arguments about the present situation in the [illegible] as well as such prospective situations as Algeria. Such a Soviet [illegible] would leave the NATO structure untouched—but then the Soviets would figure they could not gain much there anyway.

[Paragraph excised]

From the standpoint of generalized attack, Category D (Panama and Okinawa) are in much the same boat as the British colonies; for both the attack would be a generalized "anti-colonial" [illegible] cannot be reached by generalized arguments about what [illegible] military presence is legitimate since they are not under [illegible] agreements.

Category G, finally, suggests A possible US counter-line of some effectiveness—this would be that any nation is entitled to a foreign military presence as it may desire, that [illegible] the judge of what is needed for its own defense... [illegible]... certain areas are of [illegible] in relation [illegible] that as a matter of international understanding they may not be [illegible] the site of installations of an offensive character [illegible] Iran (historically neutralized since 1921 and specifically [illegible] by the Iranian declaration to which the US [illegible]. ...like Berlin itself, as to which we have never [illegible] being in offensive systems and have offered to make this a matter of binding

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[Excised] agreement. We could certainly use these two parallels without danger to our foreseeable strategic needs. Southeast Asia is tempting, but any self-denial there involves the risk that the Chinese may one day come up with short-range missiles beamed at Saigon and Bangkok. But at least Laos is a safe additional parallel.

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#### B. To Specific Pressures against Popular Sentiment.

Again, it may safely be assumed that Category A and B countries would be fairly immune to pressure. However, the airing of the whole base issue would be likely to have an effect on those nations that are tempted to seek a greater quid pro quo (aid or political support) than they now have. Such possible ante-raisers might include Spain, Portugal, and Pakistan.

The real targets, again, would be Category C and Category D countries. As a special case [excised] in fact this seems a likely early move in any event.

In the Category C cases the objective would be to persuade or scare the local government, via its opposition, to abrogate US base rights. How this would work varies a lot from case to case. Morocco has a real public opinion and it might be aroused easily against Hassan's present friendly [excised] attitude toward extensions. Libya is probably less vulnerable, though it might be reached via UAR support for the Soviet position as both on general grounds and to get rid

of the British in Aden and Cyprus; after Suez, the UAR would probably lead any hue and cry against bases. Ethiopia would probably stand firm, since (as in Libya) our HAF makes a lot of difference; however, both countries have outstanding Soviet offers that might [illegible] well be renewed as part of the overall Soviet strategy. Saudi Arabia probably would neither persuade nor scare much, nor do our Dhahran remaining rights make too much difference. Trinidad is playing its own game, chiefly for economic aid, and might go either way, but again the facility is not a vital one.

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In sum, Morocco and Libya look like the trouble spots. The latter would be substantially more serious, since the communications facilities in Morocco can be replaced, though only with time and cost, while the air bases were planned to revert to maintenance only after 1963 anyway. (The intervening period would be a nuisance at best, and perhaps worse, with some real loss to our striking posture).

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Dhahran is too small a target in importance to shoot for, and any attack on Libya might [text obscured] in the Arab World the Soviets would think it unwise. The same for Morocco, and either would have to

*page 9*

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